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Thomas Jefferson -
An Address delivered at
Columbia, Mo. June 4, 1885.
By George Graham Vest.

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THOMAS JEFFERSON

AN ADDRESS.

DELIVERED AT COLUMBIA, MO.,

ON JUNE 4, 1885.

—BY—

G. G. VEST.

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THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Two miles from the spot where Thomas Jefferson was born, near the junction of the Rivanna and James rivers, in Albemarle county, Virginia, on the lands which he inherited from his father, rises Monticello or the Little Mount, five hundred and eighty feet high, the home for more than sixty years, and the final resting place, of the patriot and statesman.

During the long summer days of the year 1765, on a rustic bench near its summit, beneath the branches of a majestic oak, could be seen two young men, in the early bloom of manhood, students of the law. and devoted friends. The one was Thomas Jefferson, and the other Dabney Carr.

Lifting their eyes from the pages of Coke on Lyttleton they rested upon a landscape of enchanting beauty. On their right the lowlands of Virginia stretched away in an unbroken plain to the ocean, with the Rivanna and James like threads of silver; whilst on their left the Blue Ridge, "robed in azure hue," looked down upon the billowy hills that nestled at their feet. It was here that the two friends made solemn compact, mutually pledging their sacred honor, that beneath this oak should be their burial place; and here their ashes rest.

Dabney Carr married Martha Jefferson, his friend's sister, and died eight years after, in the outset of his splendid career, leaving a widow and six children, who became inmates of Jefferson's household, and the objects, during life, of his unceasing love and care. Fifty-three years afterwards, having served his country for forty-four years, with an unselfish honesty, and unwearied industry unequalled in all history, Thomas Jefferson was buried by the side of his boyhood's friend.

Amongst his papers, after death, was found a rough sketch in ink of an obelisk to be made of granite, eight feet in height, together with the inscription now upon the marble tablet before us:

"Here was buried
THOMAS JEFFERSON,
Author of the Declaration of
American Independence,
of
The Statute of Virginia
For Religious Freedom, and
Father of the University
of Virginia."

It is a significant epitaph, and worthy of him who wrote it. Jefferson had been a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses and of the Continental Congress, Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, Secretary of State, Vice President and President of the United States, but none of these honors or titles are upon the stone which marked his grave. True to his convictions, shown by every public and private act, the sworn enemy of parade, sham and ostentation, the stern old Democrat wanted, living or dead, none of the tinsel and trappings of heraldic pomp or titular glory. He named for himself his passports to immortality—the rights of man, religious liberty and universal education.

Notwithstanding his many honors and public trusts, Jefferson died a bankrupt, and his estate, including Monticello, passed into the hands of strangers. The desolation of war, and the more ruinous touch of vandal hands, caused his grave to fall into neglect, and the stone which marked it has been mutilated and defaced.

On April 18th, 1882, Congress appropriated $10,000 "for the erection of a suitable monument, and to make other suitable improvements over the grave of Thomas Jefferson, at Monticello, Virginia," and through the exertions of Dr. S. S. Laws and Prof. A. F. Fleet, the slab and obelisk which originally marked the spot have been given to the University of Missouri by the heirs of Thomas Jefferson, a sacred memento of that incorruptible Chief Magistrate and greatest of American statesmen.

Time has its revenges, but also its benedictions. Missouri, granddaughter of Virginia, receives with uncovered brow and reverential hands, this historic memorial, which will rest hereafter upon the soil won to the Union by the matchless statesmanship and prophetic genius of Thomas Jefferson.

May this granite be emblematic of our eternal and unchanging devotion to his doctrines and teachings!

From that rustic seat beneath the old oak on Monticello, Jefferson went forth to make untiring and relentless war upon tyranny and oppression in every shape. For nearly fifty years his form towered in the front of every battle for civil and religious liberty, and there was not one single moment in which he ceased to struggle for human rights. It is almost impossible after so many years, and under circumstances so changed, to realize the appalling difficulties which confronted the advocates of civil and religious freedom in the last century, and especially in Virginia. So far from being a leveler, or communist, as his enemies have charged, Jefferson was by lineage, estate and association an aristocrat.

He had in his veins the blue blood of the Randolphs, who, as Jefferson tells us in his autobiography, "trace their pedigree far back in England and Scotland, to which let every one ascribe the faith and merit he chooses." Besides, he was born a land and slave owner, educated at the College of William and Mary, an institution established and endowed by royalty, and when a student in the old town of Williamsburg, the first capital of Virginia, was the favorite protege of Francis Fauquier, the royal governor, at whose table he was a constant guest.

Passionately devoted to music, sculpture and painting, an accomplished Greek, Latin and French scholar, whilst in the higher mathematics, philosophy and the sciences he was without an equal amongst public men, Jefferson was naturally drawn by such tastes and pursuits away from the people, as they were then contemptuously called, and to the privileged classes who claimed by inheritance a monopoly of wealth, education and culture.

New Virginia was then but the gross caricature of old England. The Rakehelly cavaliers who fought under Prince Rupert were reproduced in an exaggerated form in the young planters of the province. To primogeniture, entail and the union of Church and State, had been added the curse of African slavery; and to raise tobacco, clear more land and buy more slaves, all to be at last squandered in riotous living, seemed to be the chief end of the Virginia gentleman.

Loyal to king and church, these fox hunting, deep drinking and gallant Virginians were ready to risk life and limb against any odds, in defense of the divine right of kings and the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Church of England.

From his four years' study of the law, and after mastering completely Coke on Lyttleton, which he had read and re-read and carefully

annotated, Jefferson stepped into a world of crystallized wrong and robbery, made up from ages of legal precedent, and sanctified by so-called religion; but not in vain had he studied the black letter pages of that sterling old Whig text book, of which Jefferson afterwards wrote:

"Coke Lyttleton was the universal law book of students, and a sounder Whig never wrote, nor of profounder learning in the orthodox doctrines of the British Constitution, or in what was called British liberties.

"Our lawyers were then all Whigs. But when his black letter text and uncouth but cunning learning got out of fashion, and the honeyed Mansfieldism of Blackstone became the student's horn book, from that moment that profession (the nursery of our Congress) began to slide into Toryism, and nearly all the young brood of lawyers are now of that line. They suppose themselves, indeed, to be Whigs, because they no longer know what Whigism or Republicanism means."

When, therefore, in 1765, young Jefferson, fresh from Coke Lyttleton, stood at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, in Williamsburg, and heard Patrick Henry denounce in burning words the Stamp Act and the whole system of kingcraft, the seed fell into ground well prepared for the truth.

SLAVERY.

In 1769 Jefferson entered public life as a member of the House of Burgesses from his native county of Albemarle. His first measure was to provide for the gradual emancipation of slaves, but it resulted in utter failure, and is now only valuable as indicating the settled opinions of Jefferson upon the subject of slavery, and his fearlessness in grappling with the overwhelming public sentiment of his State in its favor.

Whilst a slave owner all his life, Mr. Jefferson was opposed to the institution and desired its gradual extinction. Like many intelligent men in the slaveholding States, he deprecated the existence of slavery, but resented the statement that the people of these States were alone responsible for the evil, or that those who had originally introduced slaves through their own avarice had the right to interfere afterwards with the property of the citizens to whom the slaves had been sold.

With prophetic vision, Jefferson saw the dreadful panorama of war and desolation which must accompany the end of slavery, unless peaceful means were adopted for that purpose. Speaking of gradual

emancipation, he says in his autobiography, written when he was seventy-seven years old:

"It was found that the public mind would not yet bear the proposition, nor will it bear it even at this day. Yet the day is not distant when it must bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free, nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government."

One portion of this prediction has been verified, and African slavery has been drowned in the tears and blood of both North and South.

At the same time it is not difficult to realize how utterly beyond the imagination of any mortal man fifty years ago, must have been the idea, not of emancipation, but that the emancipated slave would grasp the ballot and participate in the government of the country.

We know now that the Negro race, with its parasitic tendencies and strong local attachments, will never submit to colonization, and that this philantropic dream has vanished before the logic of events. The Negro is a component part of our civilization, and must so remain.

It is the very irony of history that of all the slave-holding States, Virginia should have suffered most in defending an institution forced upon her people by the greed of Old and New England, in opposition to the judgment and wishes of her most distinguished men.

As far back as 1770, Virginia had protested against the introduction of African slaves, but the protest was silenced by the royal edict, and the traffic went on.

In 1776, Jefferson framed with his own hand an indictment of the King of Great Britain, in the following words:

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty, in the persons of a distant people who never offended him; captivating them and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither.

"This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce.

"And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them by murdering the people on whom he has obtruded them: thus paying off

former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another."

These burning sentences were a part of the Declaration of Independence as originally written by Jefferson and reported to Congress, but so strong was the influence of South Carolina, Georgia and New England, in favor of the slave trade, that the words were stricken out, and the Declaration was adopted as we now see it.

In 1778, two years later, Virginia made it a felony to import slaves into her limits, and in 1787, when she gave to the Union the Northwest Territory, the most princely gift in all "the annals of recorded time," Jefferson prepared the ordinance, and incorporated in its provisions the condition, "that after the year 1800 of the Christian era, there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said States, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted to have been personally guilty."

Again, in the Convention which framed the Federal Constitution of 1789, when the question of permitting further importation of slaves was under discussion, Mr. Mason, of Virginia, said:

"This infernal traffic originated in the avarice of British merchants. The British Government constantly checked the attempt of Virginia to put a stop to it. Maryland and Virginia had already prohibited the importation of slaves expressly, and North Carolina had done the same in substance."

Declaring then in the strongest terms his opposition to slavery, he concluded by stating that "he lamented that some of our Eastern brethren had, from a lust of gain, embarked in this nefarious traffic."

Luther Martin, of Maryland, declared the slave trade "to be inconsistent with the principles of the Revolution and dishonorable to the American character, to have such a feature in the Constitution."

In this state of things, Gouverneur Morris, adverting to the circumstance that the sixth section of the same article, then under consideration, contained a provision "that no navigation act should pass without the consent of two-thirds of the members present in each house"—a provision particularly affecting the interests of the New England States—suggested that this, together with the fourth and fifth sections, should be referred to a committee, in order that a bargain might be formed between the parties out of these elements of special local interest on the one side and the other.

The suggestion was adopted, and on the second day afterward the committee reported, extending the slave trade to 1800, and striking out the provision requiring a two-thirds vote to enact a navigation law.

When the report came up in the Convention, General Pinckney, of South Carolina, moved to extend the slave trade to 1808, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Gorham, of Massachusetts.

Mr. Madison earnestly and eloquently opposed the motion, declaring it to be dishonorable to the American character, but his opposition was in vain.

Hand in hand, Massachusetts and South Carolina led the cohorts of slavery, and the motion prevailed, all the New England States, with South Carolina, Georgia, Maryland and North Carolina voting for it, and Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware voting against it.

Luther Martin was a member of the committee to which I have alluded, and in a letter afterward to the Maryland House of Delegates, says:

"I found the Eastern States, notwithstanding their aversion to slavery, were very willing to indulge the Southern States, at least with a temporary liberty to prosecute the slave trade, provided the Southern States in their turn would gratify them by laying no restriction on the navigation acts."

Grand, even in her desolation, Virginia, noblest of ancient or modern commonwealths, can point to this record and hear in comtemptuous silence the taunts and sneers of the political Pharisees, who "mock at her calamity."

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Although Jefferson had failed in his attack on African slavery, he did not for a moment relax in his opposition to the arbitrary and oppressive measures of the British king.

In 1772 the people of Rhode Island began the Revolution by burning the British war vessel Gaspie, in Narragansett Bay, and when the ministers of George the Third claimed the right to transport the persons accused from Rhode Island to England for trial, Jefferson saw at once that the time had come for joint and concerted action between all the colonies. To concede this claim as to the humblest citizen, was to surrender the liberties of all. In the early part of March, 1772, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lightfoot Lee, Dabney Carr and Thomas Jefferson met at the Raleigh Tavern, in Williamsburg, Virginia, and drew up the famous resolutions pledging Virginia to stand by Rhode Island, and creating a committee of eleven, whose duty it should be to correspond with the other colonies, and concert measures for the general defence.

It is singular with what pertinacity amidst all the passionate debates and resolves of this eventful period, Jefferson and his associates still clung to the idea of loyalty to the king. Not till 1775 did he reluctantly come to the conclusion that the colonies must separate from the mother country.

Thus had the commons of England advanced step by step until the head of Charles the First rolled from his shoulders before his palace at White Hall, and thus had the Girondists given place to the revolution, until Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette died beneath the axe of the Guillotine. In 1774, the people of Boston threw into the harbor the famous shipment of tea, and the King of England retaliated by closing the port. Again, Jefferson and his associates met at the Raleigh Tavern, and resolved to stand by New England. Massachusetts and Virginia then stood shoulder to shoulder, and who could have believed that in less than a century the same States would grapple in deadly conflict? On June 21st, 1775, Jefferson took his seat as a member of the Continental Congress, and in June, 1776, wrote, with his own hand, the Declaration of American Independence, the most sublime enunciation, save one, ever made to the human race.

That "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," is but a corollary from the divine injunction, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Together these two great truths embrace all the rights and duties of mankind.

The Declaration, having been reported to Congress, was debated on the second, third and fourth days of July, and adopted on the afternoon of the Fourth, every member present signing it, except Mr. Dickinson.

In after years, Mr. Jefferson related with great humor a ludicrous event connected with this solemn transaction. Near the hall in which Congress assembled was a large livery stable, and the weather being extremely warm, the bloodthirsty and aggressive flies, which swarmed through the open windows, attacked our patriotic fathers, in abbreviated pants and thin silk stockings, with such pertinacity, as to terminate the debate.

So near to the sublime is the ridiculous, and so wonderfully do the most insignificant creatures influence the destiny of man!

REFORMING VIRGINIA.

Thirteen States had now sprung into being, with institutions and laws not only varying as between themselves, but with some utterly opposed to the genius and spirit of the Declaration of Independence.

In none of the colonies were abuses so rife and firmly established as in Virginia. Primogeniture and entail had created a class of thoughtless elder brothers and vagabond heirs, who were reckless and self-indulgent to the very verge of lawlessness.

The union of Church and State had destroyed the rights of conscience, and a licentious clergy, so far from "leading the way to heaven," were merely adjuncts to the great houses, where high play and old madeira rewarded their complaisant ministry.

The world, for hundreds of years, had listened to the clanking of chains and shrieks of martyrs, whilst fire and faggot irradiated the deadly work of religious bigotry.

Even the Pilgrims, flying from persecution, no sooner found themselves firmly established in New England, than they began to torture in the name of God.

To deny any book of the Old or New Testaments to be the word of God was punished by fire or by stripes, and blasphemy left the delinquent without his ears and with his tongue bored by a red hot iron. Men were pilloried, branded and executed for non-conformity to the established church, and in but three out of the thirteen colonies was there religious toleration—Rhode Island, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Mr. Jefferson graphically describes the condition of Virginia:

"The first settlers of this country were emigrants from England of the English church, just at a point of time when it was flushed with complete victory over the religion of all other persuasions. Possessed, as they became, of the power of making, administering and executing the laws, they showed equal intolerance in this country with their Presbyterian brethren who had emigrated to the northern government. The poor Quakers were flying from persecution in England; they cast their eyes on these new countries as asylums of civil and religious freedom, but they found them free only for the reigning sect.

"General acts of the Virginia Assembly of 1659, 1662 and 1693, had made it penal in parents to refuse to have their children baptized; had prohibited the unlawful assembly of Quakers; had made it penal for any master of a vessel to bring a Quaker into the State; had ordered those already here, and such as should come thereafter, to be imprisoned until they should abjure the country; provided a milder punishment for their first and second return, but death for their third; had inhibited all persons from suffering their meetings in or near their houses, entertaining them individually, or disposing of books which supported their tenets.

"If no executions took place here, as did in New England, it was not owing to the moderation of the church or spirit of the legislature, as may be inferred from the law itself, but to historical circumstances that have not been handed down to us.

"By our own Act of Assembly of 1705, if a person brought up in the Christian religion denies the existence of a God, or the Trinity, or asserts there are more Gods than one, or denies the Christian religion to be true, or the scriptures to be of divine authority, he is punishable on the first offence by incapacity to hold any office or employment, ecclesiastical, civil or military, on the second by disability to sue, to take any gift or legacy, to be guardian, executor or administrator, and by three years' imprisonment, without bail.

"A father's right to the custody of his own children being founded in law on his right of guardianship, this being taken away, they may of course be severed from him and put by the authority of the court into more orthodox hands."

Amidst a storm of opposition and obloquy such as was never before seen on this continent, Jefferson resolutely attacked primogeniture, entail, and the union of Church and State.

From October the 11th to December the 5th the battle raged daily in the Virginia Assembly, and resulted in a substantial victory for Jefferson, although the statute for religious toleration did not finally become a law until 1786. When nearly eighty years old, Mr. Jefferson spoke of this as the most terrible contest of his long and stormy career. Against him were arrayed the wealthy families whose large estates were held by entail, the elder sons whose patrimonies were taken from them, and, more than all, the clergy and established church, who resented the statute for religious toleration as a blasphemous attack upon religion and a personal outrage upon themselves. Jefferson was denounced as a communist, an atheist, a foe to all religion, and the bitter enmities engendered by this conflict harassed him during life and assailed his memory after death.

No one knew better than Jefferson how unrelenting is religious intolerance, and how dangerous the charge of infidelity or atheism to a public man, but so true was he to the rights of conscience that in his long life, and under all assaults, he made no reply to his enemies. He absolutely denied the right of any being, except his Maker, to call in question his religious belief, and thus he lived and died.

In a private letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush, dated April 21st, 1803, he wrote of his religious opinions:

"They are the result of a life of inquiry and reflection, and very different from that anti-Christian system imputed to me by those who know nothing of my opinions. To the corruptions of Christianity I am indeed opposed, but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a Christian in the sense in which He wished any one to be, sincerely attached to his doctrines in preference to all others, ascribing to himself every human excellence, and believing he never claimed any other."

To his young grandson, when life had almost faded away, and he could feel upon his aged brow the breath of eternity, he wrote:

"This letter will be to you as one from the dead. The writer will be in the grave before you can weigh its counsels. Your affectionate father has requested that I would address you something which might possibly have a favorable influence on the course of life you have to run, and I, too, as a namesake, feel an interest in that course.

"Few words will be necessary with good dispositions on your part. Adore God. Reverence and cherish your parents. Love your neighbor as yourself and your country more than yourself. Be just. Be true. Murmur not at the ways of Providence, so that the life into which you have entered be the portal to one of eternal and ineffable bliss. And if to the dead it be permitted to care for the things of this world, every action of your life will be under my regard."

If this be atheism or infidelity, what honest man or pure woman will not pray that the world be filled with unbelief?

To Jefferson, the doctrines of primogeniture, entail, and an established church were but part and parcel of the system which gave to certain families the divine right of governing their fellow men, and against this heresy, with all its incidents and corollaries, he made untiring and relentless war until the end of life.

To him there was but one creed in matters spiritual or temporal: "All governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."

In addition to the legislation abolishing primogeniture, entail, and an established church, Jefferson, at the same session of the Assembly, introduced and passed a bill fixing the terms upon which foreigners should be admitted as citizens of Virginia, and this act became the model for the general naturalization law of the United States. Under a resolution introduced by himself in October, 1776, he commenced the next summer, in connection with Edmund Pendleton and George Wythe, a revision of the laws of Virginia, and in 1779, after three years of arduous labor, the work was completed.

But his great ambition was to establish a system of common schools, which should place a liberal education within the reach of every child in Virginia, to create high schools, found a library at Richmond at a cost of two thousand pounds a year, and change William and Mary College into a University. With indefatigable zeal he perfected all the details, but the war absorbed the entire resources of the commonwealth, and long years of eventful history passed before he realized any part of his cherished plans.

GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

On June 1st, 1779, Jefferson was inaugurated Governor of Virginia, succeeding Patrick Henry, the first executive of the State. From the day of his inauguration to the hour when he retired from office, he was overwhelmed with difficulties, before which an ordinary man would have shrunk appalled and hopeless.

Without navy, arms or money, Jefferson was expected to defend an exposed seaboard, furnish supplies to the Virginia troops in the field, and prevent the horrors of an Indian war on the western border.

All that could be done by unflagging energy and the wisest fore thought he accomplished, but in 1780 the storm of war burst with relentless fury upon Virginia.

Gates was defeated at Camden, the traitor Arnold sailed up the James, burning and pillaging on either side, until he captured Richmond, whilst news came that Washington's army was on the eve of dissolution.

In 1781 Cornwallis invaded Virginia from the South, and a troop of cavalry dashed upon Monticello with the hope of capturing Governor Jefferson. Five minutes before their arrival Jefferson escaped, and his faithful slaves refused, under bribes and threats, to give information of the route he had taken.

As always in the hour of national calamity, a scapegoat was necessary to appease the popular disquietude, and Jefferson was in this instance the victim. Conscious of his faithful discharge of duty, he chafed under these assaults as never before or after, and, although acquitted by the unanimous vote of the Assembly, declared that he would never accept another public trust, and that, with the close of the war, his political career had ended.

Surrounded at Monticello by his family, to whom he was tenderly attached, and with his books and flowers, Jefferson looked forward to years of quiet happiness, such as every man worn with the battle of

life has pictured in his day dreams of the future. But Providence had destined otherwise.

In the spring of 1782 death robbed him of a wife whose beauty and accomplishments gave to Monticello the most charming mistress that ever blessed a Virginia home, and from a stupor of grief Jefferson awoke, anxious to leave the scenes which constantly reminded him of his irreparable loss.

Again he plunged into the vortex of politics, and in 1783 we find him at Annapolis, ready to take his seat in Congress, to which he had been recently elected. Again he devoted himself with untiring assiduity to public business, and, as chairman of the Committee on Coins and Currency, gave to his country and the world a system of coinage on the decimal basis, the most perfect known amongst men.

At the same session he introduced the celebrated ordinance, afterwards enacted in 1787, by which Virginia gave to the Union the great States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

ENVOY TO FRANCE.

On May 7th, 1784, Jefferson was appointed Envoy Extraordinary to assist Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin, then abroad, in concluding commercial treaties with Great Britain, Holland, and other governments, on "the footing of the most favored nation," and on March 10th, 1785, he succeeded Dr. Franklin as minister to France.

Jefferson remained in Europe five years, residing at Paris, and watching with the deepest interest the great drama of the French Revolution. He witnessed the fall of the Bastile, and the massacre of the Swiss Guards; but, like Charles James Fox, he saw through the blood and horror the outlines of liberty; and, unlike Burke, he beheld in the French queen, not only a beautiful and unfortunate woman but the reckless, self-indulgent cause of her husband's ruin.

"This angel, as gaudily painted in the rhapsodies of Burke," he wrote forty years afterwards, "with some smartness of fancy, but no sound sense, was proud, disdainful of restraint, indignant at all obstacles to her will, eager in the pursuit of pleasure, and firm enough to hold to her desires or perish in their wreck.

"Her inordinate gambling and dissipations, with those of the Count d'Artois and others of her clique, had been a sensible item in the exhaustion of the treasury, which called into action the reforming hand of the nation; and her opposition to it, her inflexible perverseness and dauntless spirit, led herself to the Guillotine, drew the king on with

her, and plunged the world into crimes and calamities which will for ever stain the pages of modern history. I have ever believed that, had there been no queen, there would have been no Revolution, no force would have been provoked or exercised."

Like John Knox, in the days of Mary Queen of Scots, Jefferson could not appreciate the beauty which looked without pity on the starving multitude, and listened without emotion to the cries of her unfortunate people.

The glamour of royalty did not seem to affect this stern republican, who rejected with scorn the divine right of kings.

In one of his letters he writes thus of the Monarchs then occupying the proudest thrones of earth:

"While I was in Europe, I often amused myself in contemplating the characters of the then reigning sovereigns of Europe. Louis the Sixteenth was a fool, of my own knowledge, and in despite of the answers made for him at his trial. The King of Spain was a fool, and of Naples the same. They passed their lives in hunting, and despatched two couriers a week over one thousand miles to let each other know what game they had killed the preceding days. The King of Sardinia was a fool. All these were Bourbons. The Queen of Portugal, a Braganza, was an idiot by nature, and so was the King of Denmark. Their sons, as regents, exercised the powers of government. The King of Prussia, successor to Frederick the Great, was a mere hog in body as well as in mind.

"Gustavus of Sweden, and Joseph of Austria, were really crazy, and George of England, you know, was in a straight waistcoat. There remained them none but old Catherine, who had been too lately picked up to have lost her common sense.

"In this state Bonaparte found Europe, and it was the state of the rulers which lost it without a struggle. These animals had become without mind and powerless, and so will every hereditary monarch be after a few generations."

Every fibre of Jefferson's being sympathized with the unfortunate people whose sweat and blood had been wrung from them for centuries, to feed these royal animals, and every hour in Europe added to his hatred of the monarchical system.

In February, 1787, he left Paris, and traveled incognito through the fairest provinces of France, investigating the home life of the people, their houses, food and modes of agriculture. He found in one province a laboring man's wages $27.75 per annum, and a woman's half that amount. "Their bread," he writes in his diary, "is half wheat and

half rye, made once in three or four weeks, to prevent too great a consumption. In the morning they eat bread with an anchovy or an onion. Their dinner in the middle of the day is bread, soup and vegetables. Their supper is the same; with their vegetables they have always oil and vinegar; on Sunday they have meat and wine."

Besides attending to his diplomatic duties and making commercial treaties with all the principal nations of Europe, Jefferson found time to correspond with leading scientists upon chemistry, astronomy, geology and natural history. He collected and shipped to the United States seeds and plants of all kinds suitable to our soil and climate, and procured for Buffon, the great naturalist, specimens of the animals and birds peculiar to this continent.

When in France, he wrote and published his celebrated "Notes on Virginia," which attracted universal attention, and passed through several editions.

Whilst making treaties, writing philosophical essays, and watching the Revolution, this remarkable man invented an improved plough, which was awarded a medal by the Royal Agricultural Society of the Seine, and was exhibited to William C. Rives, Minister to France in 1853, as "The Prize Plough of Thomas Jefferson;" afterwards he invented the revolving chair, now found in so many offices and households.

Rice was largely consumed in France, and anxious to know why the American article was unable to compete successfully with that raised in Southern Europe, he made a journey across the Alps in 1787, into the rice-growing districts, and being unable to procure some improved seed rice, which he discovered there, on account of laws prohibiting its exportation, he filled the pockets of his coat and overcoat with the best rice, of the best rice-producing district of Italy, and sent it to Charleston. It came to hand safely, was distributed in quantities of ten and twelve grains to planters, and being carefully tended, furnished South Carolina the best rice in the world.

SECRETARY OF STATE.

After five years of unremitting toil for his country and mankind, Jefferson was compelled to give some attention to his private affairs, and left Paris in October, 1789, with his two daughters, expecting to return within the year. On November 17th, 1789, he landed safely at Norfolk, and found an invitation from Washington to become Secretary of State.

With reluctance, but acting under a sense of public obligation, he accepted the office, and entered upon its duties.

Accustomed, as Jefferson must have been, to the uncertainty of political events and the mutations of public sentiment, he was profoundly astonished to find that a powerful party had come into existence in the United States, which distrusted the people, and favored a strong, if not monarchical government.

At the head of this party was the Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, a man of rare ability and unquestionable courage, but without faith in republican institutions or in any form of government not possessing monarchical features.

That such were Hamilton's opinions cannot be doubted.

In Madison's Debates of the Convention which framed the Constitution, we find Hamilton reported as saying that:

"In his private opinion he had no scruple in declaring, supported as he was by the opinions of so many of the wise and good, that the British government was the best in the world."

He declared that the Senate of the United States should be framed on the model of the House of Lords, and in speaking of the Chief Executive, said:

"The English model is the only good one on this subject. The hereditary interests of the King were so interwoven with that of the nation, and his personal emoluments so great, that he was placed above the danger of being corrupted from abroad, and at the same time he was sufficiently independent and sufficiently controlled, to answer the purpose of the institution at home."

The notes written by Hamilton himself, from which he delivered this speech, can be found in his life by his son, and in them are the following points:

"Here I shall give my sentiments of the best form of government, not as a thing attainable by us, but as a model which we ought to approach as near as possible. British Constitution best form. * * * Society naturally divides itself into two political divisions—the few and the many—who have distinct interests, * * * and if separated they will need a mutual check. This check is a Monarch. * * * He ought to be hereditary, and to have so much power that it will not be his interest to risk much to acquire more."

That there was a party in the United States disposed to Monarchy is put beyond question by the statements of Washington, Madison, Jay, John Marshall and Monroe. Even John Adams declared that, "The proposition that the people are the best keepers of their own

liberties is not true; they are the worst conceivable; they are no keepers at all; they can neither judge, act, think or will as a political body * * * Hypocrisy, simulation and finesse are not more practiced in the Courts than in popular elections, nor more encouraged by Courts than people."

During the war for independence the Colonies had been held together by a common danger, but even then it was evident that the articles of confederation must be set aside and a stronger government established. The power to levy and collect taxes, provide for the general defence, and act as a Sovereign within its proper sphere, were necessary attributes of government demanded by self-preservation itself.

This necessity created a tendency to centralization, and the excesses of the French revolution, at which the world stood aghast, furnished what seemed a conclusive argument against popular government.

Jefferson soon found himself almost alone in the elegant society of New York. The wealth, culture and refinement of the city were shocked at the atrocities committed in Paris, and Hamilton was their pet and idol.

"I had left France," Mr. Jefferson wrote long after, "In the first year of her revolution, in the fervor of national rights, and zeal for reformation. My conscientious devotion to those rights could not be heightened, but it had been aroused and excited by daily exercise.

"The President received me cordially, and my colleagues and the principal citizens apparently with welcome. The courtesies of dinner parties given me, as a stranger newly arrived among them, placed me at once in their familiar society. But I cannot describe the wonder and mortification with which the table conversation filled me. Politics were the chief topic, and a preference of kingly over republican government was evidently the favorite sentiment.

"An apostate I could not be, nor yet a hypocrite; and I found myself, for the most part, the only advocate on the republican side of the question, unless among the guests there chanced to be some member of that party from the legislative houses."

It was not possible that harmony, or any relation except that of antagonism, should exist between Jefferson and Hamilton. They were both men of great ability, positive convictions, and with views utterly irreconcilable as to the government.

Jefferson was the incarnate principle of Democracy, pure and simple, without alloy.

Hamilton had no sympathy with the people, or popular government. In February, 1802, he wrote to Gouverneur Morris, his most intimate friend, and afterwards his eulogist:

"Mine is an odd destiny. Perhaps no man in the United States has sacrificed or done more for the present constitution than myself, and, contrary to all my anticipations of its fate, as you know from the beginning, I am still laboring to prop the frail and worthless fabric. * * * Every day proves to me more and more that this American world was not made for me."

Notwithstanding the great authority of Washington, and the influence which his character exercised upon all who approached him, there soon occurred an open rupture between the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury.

In February, 1792, Jefferson mentioned to the President his intention to retire from the Cabinet, and, when pressed for his reasons, frankly stated that it was impossible for Col. Hamilton and himself to continue together in the administration, and that now a proposition had been brought forward, the decision of which must definitely determine "whether we live under a limited or unlimited government."

"To what proposition do you allude?" asked the President.

"To that," replied Jefferson, "in the report of manufactures (by Hamilton), which, under color of giving bounties for the encouragement of particular manufactures, meant to establish the doctrine that the constitution, in giving power to Congress to provide for the general welfare, permitted Congress to take everything under their charge which they should deem for the public welfare. If this was maintained, then the enumeration of powers in the constitution does not at all constitute the limits of their authority."

If Jefferson should now revisit the earth, he would find the same doctrine advanced even amongst those who claim to be exponents of his principles and teaching.

In the meantime all Europe was preparing to attack France, and the question presented to Washington's Cabinet was whether the United States should remain neutral or assist the people who had assisted us in our struggle for Independence?

On April 22nd, 1793, the proclamation for neutrality was issued, and on the same day Citizen Genet arrived in a French frigate as minister to the United States from the French Republic.

He was received with such tumultuous acclamation as was never before or since given to any ambassador or visitor to our shores. Public meetings, banquets, oratory and music evidenced the deep feeling

of the American people for the cause of France. A storm of indignation burst upon Washington and his Cabinet for refusing to give immediate assistance to our allies of the war for Independence, then struggling against the combined despotism of Europe, led by England.

It is impossible for us to realize now the popular excitement of those eventful days, or the clamor raised about the government, but Washington and his Cabinet stood firm, and the result justified the wisdom of their course.

Jefferson's correspondence with Genet and the English minister, afterwards published by order of Congress, stands to-day and will forever remain, the most wonderful exhibition of learning, skill and moderation to be found in the annals of diplomacy.

VICE-PRESIDENT.

Jefferson retired from Washington's cabinet on January the 1st, 1794, the acknowledged leader of the Republican party, and with the compliments and plaudits of his countrymen. Even his enemies were forced to admit that his correspondence with Genet had exhibited the highest order of ability, and had shown him to be both patriot and statesman.

In 1796 he was called from Monticello to become Vice-President, Mr. Adams having received in the Electoral College seventy-one votes and Mr. Jefferson sixty eight, which resulted, as the constitution then provided, in making the former President and the latter Vice-President of the United States.

To the duties of this office he brought the same industry and learning as to every other position.

When a young lawyer, beginning his public career as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, he had adopted the practice of noting down in a small, leather-bound volume rules and precedents in parliamentary law, and upon this as a basis he now prepared his "Manual of Parliamentary Practice," the highest authority in legislative proceedings known to the civilized world.

PRESIDENT.

In the meantime the Federalists and Republicans were marshalling their forces for the Presidential contest of 1800. The conservative and mediatory influence of Washington had been withdrawn, and party spirit raged untramelled.

The press was in the hands of the Federalists, and Jefferson the mark at which all their arrows were aimed. He was pictured as an

atheist, libertine, a monster in human form. One of the favorite charges against him was that he was an ally of Napoleon Bonaparte, the Corsican tyrant. The political preacher had already appeared in the Presidential canvass, and although not so alliterative as in modern times, was equally as sensational.

The great preacher then in New York was Dr. John Mason, and he was shocked beyond measure to find from the "Notes on Virginia," that Jefferson had doubts as to there having been a universal deluge. Some days before the election Dr. Mason published a pamphlet entitled, "The Voice of Warning to Christians on the Ensuing Election," in which he exclaimed: "Christians! it is thus that a man, whom you are expected to elevate to the chief magistracy, insults yourself and your Bible."

We can imagine what sort of partisan this reverend politician must have been, when we learn that in one of his sermons he paused and with uplifted hands and eyes burst into prayer:

"Send us, if thou wilt, murrain upon our cattle, a famine upon our land, cleanness of teeth in our borders, send us pestilence to waste our cities, send us, if it pleases Thee, the sword to bathe itself in the blood of our sons, but spare us, Lord God Most Merciful, spare us that curse—most dreadful of all curses—an alliance with Napoleon Bonaparte."

As he uttered these words the blood gushed from his nostrils, but putting his handkerchief to his face, he then waved it aloft as if a bloody banner in the coming contest.

Through all this scandal and vituperation, temporal and ecclesiastical, the people, as they always do, discerned the true issue, and the Republicans were successful. Jefferson and Burr each received seventy-three votes in the Electoral College, to sixty-five for Adams, sixty-four for Pinckney, and one for Jay, and after some weeks of great excitement the House of Representatives ratified the will of the people by making Jefferson President and Burr Vice-President. The alien and sedition laws had done their work, and the first Republican administration assumed control of the Government.

The new President rode to the Capitol on horseback, hitched his steed to the palings, and quietly took the oath of office. There was no procession, no inaugural ball, no show and parade. Right or wrong, this was Jefferson's idea of a republic, and the commencement of a Republican administration.

It is interesting to know that in the first year of his administration Mr. Jefferson made sixteen removals from office, and in the next year about the same number, but the demand on the part of his own ad-

herents was vigorous and persistent for a more frequent use of the official guillotine. In the second year of his administration he wrote to one of his Cabinet:

"I still think our original idea as to office is best; that is, to depend for the obtaining a just participation, on deaths, resignations and delinquencies. This will least affect the tranquillity of the people, and prevent their giving in to the suggestion of our enemies, that ours has been a contest for office, not for principle."

During the administrations of Washington and Adams the absurd custom of Congress being opened by the President with a personal address had been adopted, in imitation of the English system, but Jefferson quietly transmitted his message in writing, and such has been the custom ever since.

He also refused to hold weekly levees, where a mob of sweating and uncomfortable people, in tawdry finery, torture each other and the President until life becomes a burthen, but this travesty on common sense has since returned to plague the chief executive and disgust the sensible public.

Jefferson sought to simplify the government, and relieve it from the display and extravagance by which monarchy aimed to dazzle the people and conceal the outrages inflicted upon them.

The trinity of his political faith was a strict construction of the constitution, economy in expenditures, and honest men in office.

His inaugural on March the 4th, 1801, should be treasured with Washington's Farewell Address.

"Equal and exact justice to men of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political, peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administration for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor as the sheet anchor of our peace at home, and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people —a mild and safe corrective of abuses, which are lopped by the sword of revolution, when peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decision of the majority, the vital principle of Republics from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate source of despotism; a well disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as

its handmaid; the diffusing of information and the arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; freedom of persons under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected."

The first important act of Mr. Jefferson's administration was to dispatch three frigates and one sloop of our small navy to the Mediterranean, for the purpose of overawing the Algerine pirates and terminating their daring attacks upon American commerce.

When Minister to France, he had been annoyed and irritated by the fact that the United States and other nations were compelled to pay tribute to these buccaneers. One bill sent to Mr. Jefferson for the ransom of an American crew was as follows:

For 3 captains,	$6,000 each,	$18,000
" 2 mates,	4,000 "	8,000
" 2 passengers,	4,000 "	8,000
" 14 seamen,	1,400 "	29,600
		$53,600

Jefferson was determined that this national disgrace should be obliterated, and history shows how well and thoroughly the gallant Decatur carried out the instructions of his chief.

The most splendid achievement of Jefferson's administration, however, was the acquisition by purchase from Napoleon of the Louisiana Territory, which extended our limits from ocean to ocean and gave us the mouth of the Mississippi.

When the treaty was signed at Paris, Mr. Livingstone, one of the Commissioners, said:

"We have lived long, but this is the noblest work of our whole lives. The treaty which we have just signed has not been obtained by art nor dictated by force. It will change vast solitudes into flourishing districts, and from this day the United States take their place among the powers of the first rank. * * * The instruments which we have just signed will cause no tears to be shed. They prepare ages of happiness for innumerable generations of human creatures.

"The Mississippi and Missouri will see them succeed one another and multiply, truly worthy of the regard and care of providence, in the bosom of equality, under just laws, freed from the errors of superstition and bad government."

"If to the dead it be permitted to care for the things of this world," with what satisfaction must the spirit of Jefferson to-day look down upon this vast domain, acquired by his patriotic foresight; a land of plenty, filled with happy homes, and temples devoted to education, science and art, such as this in which we now assemble?

After acquiring Louisiana, including the vast region stretching to the Pacific, Mr. Jefferson's next object was to ascertain the nature and resources of these possessions, and for this purpose the expedition of Lewis and Clark left St. Louis in 1805, came up the Missouri, and for two years, four months and ten days was lost to civilization, and exposed to dangers and hardships, the recital of which equals the stories of romance.

Not many months after the acquisition of Louisiana, intelligence reached the President of the treasonable design of Aaron Burr to seize upon the mouth of the Mississippi, invade Mexico, and establish a south-western empire. After the death of Hamilton, Burr had served out his term as Vice President, presiding at the impeachment trial of Judge Chase, and then finding his public carreer ended, his restless ambition had conceived the scheme which ruined Blennerhassett, and made himself an outcast and a wanderer.

Party rancor attempted at the time to make Burr a martyr, and Jefferson a tyrant, but impartial history has long since entered the judgment that the President was right, and that Burr was guilty of the designs attributed to him.

The latter part of Jefferson's second term was clouded with the prospect of war with England, and with the distress caused by the embargo, which he enforced to the end of his administration, in the hope of averting an expensive and ruinous conflict of arms.

In 1809, with the country four times greater in resources and territory than in 1800, his second term as President closed, and after forty-four years public service he transferred the government to his friend James Madison and went back to Monticello, and to the labor of love, which had been amongst the dreams of his early ambition. His whole energies were now devoted to establishing the University of Virginia, upon a system singularly illustrative of that equality and liberty which formed the leading characteristics of Jefferson's life and opinions. The University differs from other American colleges in these particulars; there is no President, and all the professors are of equa- rank except that one of them is elected chairman of the faculty. The University is simply a group of schools, and the student chooses himself the studies he elects to pursue. Unlike other institutions, there is no rule requiring a student to attend religious exercises, but his conduct in this regard is governed entirely by his own sense of right.

The ruling idea in every detail is an absence of coercion, and an appeal to manhood and conscience.

Jefferson lived seventeen years after the close of his public career, and his last hours were embittered by the pressure of debts which he was

unable to satisfy. His splendid library, a portion of it left him by George Wythe, was sold to the United States, and he was finally compelled to ask the Legislature of Virginia to authorize him to dispose of his lands by lottery, in order to meet the harassing liabilities pressing upon him.

Although an exact man, Jefferson practiced the hospitality which prevailed in Virginia everywhere at that time, and he had never learned the modern methods by which a public officer can in a few years become a millionaire upon a small salary. When he left Washington City he was forced to borrow ten thousand dollars to pay debts contracted for household expenses, and whilst we may deprecate the style of living which necessitated such outlay, we must admire the integrity that procured the money to meet the debt by a mortgage upon Monticello, rather than by a raid upon the public treasury.

Upon the canvass of the past, Washington and Jefferson stand forth the central figures in our struggle for independence. The character of the former was so rounded and justly proportioned, that so long as our country lives, or a single community of Americans can be found, Washington will be "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

To Washington we are more indebted than to any one man for national existence, but what availed the heroism of Bunker Hill, the sufferings of Valley Forge, or the triumph at Yorktown, if the Government they established had been but an imitation of the monarchy from which we had separated?

To Jefferson we owe eternal gratitude for his sublime confidence in popular government, and his unfaltering courage in defending at all times and in all places, the great truth, that "All governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."

France has given to the people of the United States a statue of Liberty, which will stand in the Gateway of the Republic, a beacon-light to the oppressed of all lands.

It has been placed there, not by monopolists and millionaires, but with the contributions of the sempstress in her garret, the wage-worker in factory and furnace. The love of Liberty is found not in palaces, but with the poor and oppressed. It flutters in the heart of the caged bird, and sighs with the worn and wasted prisoner in his dungeon. It has gone with martyrs to the stake, and kissed their burning lips as the tortured spirit winged its flight to God!

In the temple of this deity Jefferson was high priest!

For myself, I worship no mortal man living or dead; but if I could kneel at such a shrine, it would be with uncovered head and loving heart at the grave of Thomas Jefferson.

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